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Post-graduation without a paddle



KELLY IVERSON
THE COLLEGIAN

We are all in the same boat. And you know, I thought I was talking about a figurative boat until last night when I saw some guy literally kayaking down Anderson. Oh yes, it is time to graduate and venture into the real world, desperately looking for checks, while only finding reality ones.

You may now be regretting all those group projects you let me juggle single-handedly or all the jobs you passed up because “you focused on your grades,” where no one was sure if your moving target was your schooling or a pint of beer. We are going to walk across the stage soon with one too many mimosas and no job in sight. While it may seem like the appropriate time for a quarter-life crisis, I’m not keen to the idea of sharing tissues with my parents going through their mid-life ones.

Transitioning from the classroom to the boardroom, break room or whatever room we land careers in, may seem like an impossible feat, but I’m here to tell you to hold the tears in and fear not. The next step you take, whether it be moving back home with your parents (can’t wait, Patty) or starting a beeline to Aggieville after commencement, won’t determine the path you were meant to pave for the rest of your life.

It’s never too late. There’s a long list of things many of us are wishing we had done now that we are graduating. I wish I would have went to fewer clubs and joined more instead. I wish I would have been more involved. But wishing for things we’ve passed up will only remind us of the failure to do something we are obsessing about in the first place. Instead of wishing your life away post-graduation, find a way to channel these “should have been” into the motivation for real, tangible things that you won’t let yourself be able to regret not doing later.

As graduates, we can’t ever be too picky. Failing to join a specific club while at K-State doesn’t mean you can’t find a similar organization like it as a graduate. Relocating doesn’t mean you lost your chance at something, it only means you have been given the opportunity to explore wherever it is you wind up at after graduation until you find someplace to utilize what you missed out on in the past, or find an ever greater passion.

I regret to inform you, as I have regretted having to tell my professors, I have taken very ill. It seems that senioritis is slowly engulfing my entirety this last week of school, so I apologize for my usually lengthy advice being cut short; I know how you crave my wisdom. While I may not be the best senior to receive advice from, as I too am one of those lucky few without a job lined up post-graduation, I can tell you this: I have never been more excited to leave Manhattan.

You have been good to me, but graduating makes me realize the world is literally and figuratively vast interconnected oceans of opportunity and chance, and I encourage every one of us, while we find ourself in this creaky boat, to explore it the absolute best we can.

The views and opinions expressed in this column are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of The Collegian.

Kelly Iverson is a senior in mass communications. Please send comments to opinion@kstatecollegian.com.



ILLUSTRATION BY KENT WILLMETH

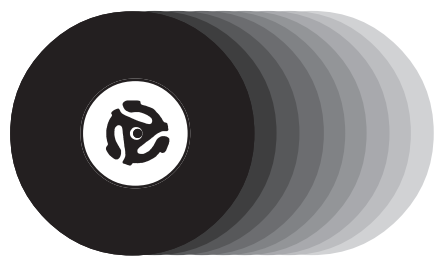


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The collegiate finish line is finally within our reach

By CHASE FORTUNE
THE COLLEGIAN

It's that time of year again. While underclassmen are scheming up summer plans and pounding energy drinks to make it through finals, seniors everywhere are nostalgically grasping for the last bit of their college life as it slowly slips away into memory. For those people, the veil of the American college world is being pulled away, revealing a frightening realm of adulthood, full of even more responsibilities and deadlines. And though I would wish it not so, my time has finally come. I am now one of those people.

While the thought of leaving this cushy life of midterms, impromptu parties and a plethora of close friends and cute girls, I look forward to the new life that the class of 2015 and I enter with vigor. But before I go, I'd like to offer up reflection on my experiences during my time at this fine establishment we share. Upon consideration, I've compiled a few things that I am proud to have accomplished along with some things I would have done differently, given the chance. However generic or distinctive these may be, they are my honest thoughts on my time in college. My

only hope is that my meanderings may bring some inspiration for those still privileged enough to have a few years of college left.

Get involved
This is something I wish I would've done more of. When you enter the college life from high school, you're presented with the opportunity to redefine yourself. You're out from under the wings of your parents and you finally have some autonomy in your life. Utilize it. Find things that interest you, from sports you've never played to clubs you find fascinating. Plus, getting involved is a great way to build friendships. Now don't get me wrong. Over the last several years I've developed a group of close friends, however, I might have more if I'd gotten more involved. Besides, I can't think of anyone that's ever complained about having too many friends.

Try new things

Now I know this is one of those generic points you'll see on just about every blog post or Buzzfeed article about going to college, but that's honestly because it's true. College is the time to get weird and embrace the unknown with abandon. Never had sushi? Try it. Never studied abroad? Go for it. Never learned to speak

another language? Learn it.

During my junior year, I was offered the opportunity to travel to Uganda for a research project. At that time, I'd never been out of the country and the thought of spending a summer traveling across an unfamiliar foreign country was a little unsettling to a small town kid like myself, but it turned out to be one of the most amazing experiences of my life. My world view expanded so much; I learned a lot and met so many exceptional people with unique stories. Jumping at this new opportunity gave me the chance to learn things that just can't be taught in the classroom.

Find a passion, not just a degree

I am an expert in this field. I've switched majors more times than I'd like to admit, but you know what? It helped me find what I was passionate about. Think about it. You're spending a

ludicrous amount of money, time and energy on a degree. Shouldn't it be something that invigorates you, or that gets you excited to start the day? Yes, we all need to make money, but it shouldn't be the sole driver in your decision when picking a career path. For example, my parents wanted me to go into medicine, and I tried but it just wasn't something that interested me. Don't get me wrong, I know plenty of people that are incredibly passionate about the medical field. It just wasn't for me. I challenge those who are still searching to find something that challenges you and keeps you enthusiastic to learn more.

Find your balance

This is one that I believe we all, as college students, struggle with. If there's one thing I've learned from college, it's that everything in life takes balance. As I mentioned above, college

offers you a chance to branch out and experience new things, but in order to be successful at it you have to know how to balance it. Having a healthy social life can be incredibly fulfilling, but it shouldn't take priority over the entire reason you're in college.

The equilibrium between all the pulls of the college experience can be hard to ascertain. This has always been somewhat difficult for me. I'm somewhat of an odd combination of carefree social butterfly and workaholic. Over the years, I've come to find that it takes a little strategy to ensure you're not neglecting one for the sake of the other. For me, the key to success in college and beyond is finding a balance in life. Find that sweet spot that allows you the ability to focus on your work and goals without neglecting your other passions and loved ones.

During my seeming-

ly short five years at this school, I've had an abundance of experiences, both good and bad, that have helped shape the man I am today. Not too long ago I was just an eager young student, unsure about the path I was on, but running headlong into it nonetheless. To be honest, that hasn't changed much. I still have little knowledge as to what I am doing or where life will take me, but my time here has shown me that we don't always have to see the finish line, we just have to find a path to it.

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Chase Fortune is a senior in mass communications. Please send comments to opinion@kstatecollegian.com.

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K-State student tells of his Google intern experience

By SARAH KNOWLES
THE COLLEGIAN

There is an electric car, an infinitely long road and a battery store with an infinite amount of batteries. Now here comes the challenge: the car can only hold two batteries at a time, so what's the trick to making the car travel infinitely far?

This was just one of the many brainteasers that Blake VanLandingham, senior in computer science, faced in his interview process with Google.

Once he made it through three technical phone interviews, made up of riddles and data structure puzzles, he entered the host-matching phase: the final two interviews that would determine the placement of his internship.

However, VanLandingham had been strategizing long before his interviews. In a pool of students from MIT, Stanford and Princeton, he knew that he needed a leg up in the game.

For Google, internal connections are everything. Applicants are guaranteed an interview if their resumes are submitted by a full-time Googler, so VanLandingham took full advantage of a K-State networking opportunity.

"I got in touch with Blake when I came to give a tech talk on campus, in 2012 I believe," Cory Hardman, Google senior software engineer and K-State alumnus, said. "Before the talk, Blake came up to me with his resume."

It wasn't Wildcat pride that drove Hardman to give Blake a shot, though.

"I submitted his resume based on the conversation I had with Blake," Hardman said. "He had worked on some impressive projects and quite a bit of good internship experience and he had just started college. He was a pleasure to talk to and I could tell he was already a very skilled software engineer and he would only improve."

So skilled in fact, that VanLandingham interned two consecutive summers and was later offered a full-time position in New York City.

"The first internship was in Seattle where I worked on the Hangouts team—so that's like vid-



PARKER ROBB | THE COLLEGIAN

Blake VanLandingham, senior in computer science, is the first K-State student to ever land a job at Google as an undergraduate. VanLandingham has already completed two internships with Google, and will join the tech company in New York City following graduation.

eo chat, instant messenger too... Essentially, I wrote a tool to help them patch connection issues, so if you're chatting with someone and messages aren't getting through or being dropped, it's a way for us to better bug that and figure out what's going on," VanLandingham said.

As an intern, VanLandingham spent a majority of his 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. workdays writing and rewriting code in between meals, meetings and presentations.

"My second summer, I was on the slides team in New York City working with Google's version of Power Point," VanLandingham said.

VanLandingham's project was adding the "Elbow Connector" and the "Curved Connector" to the different line drawing options.

"It was super interesting, a lot of math. It released the week after I left, to the public so now I can just

pull up Google Drives and see what I did all summer," VanLandingham said.

Although, if you've seen the Owen Wilson and Vince Vaughn movie "The Internship," then you know that Google is not all work and no play. VanLandingham can vouch for this.

"I was an intern when the Internship movie came out... in a lot of ways, the perks line up pretty well with what you see in the movie."

He goes on to describe the high quality, organic meals, full coffee bars complete with baristas, mini kitchens every where you look filled with healthy snacks 24/7, the on-site gym, Xboxes, ping-pong and pool tables, everything you can imagine all the way down to a hybrid car available for rent. For free. In addition to all of Google's

recreational expenses, however, they still manage to provide more than adequate salary figures for their interns.

According to a Business Insider article titled, "What It's Really Like To Be A Google Intern," Google interns get paid more than most full-time employees across the country...the average Google intern makes \$5,678 per month, or \$68,136 per year.

There is no doubt that Google values their employees and wants to see them be successful.

Luke Fiorante, a senior from Brown University, said in his experience as a Google intern, he gained exposure to the types of ideas and ways of thinking that made Google into the innovative company that it is today.

"There were many opportunities for interns to attend talks given

by anyone from software engineers to high-ranking executives, on any topic from marketing strategies to how Google's search algorithm works," Fiorante said.

Fiorante worked alongside two full-time mentors he said were excellent at making sure they were always accessible, answering questions and providing support whenever he needed it.

"I ended up accomplishing a lot more than I set out to do and learning a hell of a lot along the way," Fiorante said.

In the end it was VanLandingham's experience and drive in such a field as "Google thinking" that got him to the job he will now hold. The connections and dedication during school and his internship paid off with that full time job at Google for VanLandingham after graduation.

StreetTalk

compiled by Cristy Law

??? "What is your favorite part or memory of K-State?" ???



LOGAN MARSHALL
SENIOR
GENERAL MANAGEMENT

"The family atmosphere is my favorite part. Everyone's nice, that's why I came here in the first place."



MORGAN MOXLEY
SENIOR
PUBLIC RELATIONS

"I'd say my favorite part is that it feels like home. It's such a big campus but you see so many people you know and friendly faces. I like the people."



TRISH REID
SENIOR
PUBLIC RELATIONS

"My best friend was the student body president at KU. She came for the KU vs. K-State game and was very cocky about it. So when we won and stormed the court, I got to rub it in. It was fun."



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Freedom of expression includes tattoos, piercings

By **HATTIE DOOLITTLE**
THE COLLEGIAN

Tattoos and piercings: accessories that once represented the rebels of the world as an emblem of toughness and defiance are now slowly becoming more common and socially acceptable. While tattoos and some piercings are still not viewed as professional, I still think a few piercings and tattoos that are subtle, meaningful and original should be tolerated by the workforce. People should not have to worry about taking their piercings out or covering up tattoos as long as it isn't a distraction or danger to their workplace.

Lina Marks, sophomore in management and gerontology, said she recently went to an interview for an internship where she felt obligated to take out a set of her double piercings.

"A typical rule I go by is one stud per ear," Marks said. "Having multiple piercings or big fancy earrings can distract the interviewer and affect their perceptions of how they view you as a person."

The U.S. Equal Employ-

ment Opportunity Commission prohibits employers from discriminating based on race, color, religions, sex or national origin. This does not include those with tattoos. Employers should not discriminate based on any factor, tattoos included.

Hannah Miller, sophomore in pre-professional elementary education, said she has three tattoos. The one on her wrist is particularly visible.

"Where I work at my job now, I don't have to cover it up because it's small, but where I used to work, I had to wear a watch so that people couldn't see it," Miller said.

Some people get tattoos based on their religious beliefs, to honor the death of a loved one, to show their artistic expression or simply to be spontaneous and get something spur of the moment that's permanent. Whatever the case may be, the permanence of tattoos represent the individuality of a person, which should actually be more helpful when hiring in the workforce.

According to a Working World career article titled, "Tattoos and Piercings in the Workplace: Common Sense Advice for Workers with Body Art," not all employers are against the idea of body art or piercings. Borders, one of the nation's largest book sellers, sees these things as a definite plus in an employee and thinks it makes them more interesting.

If a manager was hiring a

person for a position and asked what the meaning behind their tattoo was, they would be able to learn more about a potential employee based off their response and decision-making process to get permanent ink on their body. Stephanie Boyer, freshman in family studies and human services, said she has a tattoo of a hummingbird with writing on her back.

"I am very happy (I got my tattoo) due to the fact that it meant so much to me," Boyer said. "The writing is my grandmother's handwriting, quoting something she would always say to me. The birds represent my late grandfather, who loved hummingbirds. My grandparents meant the world to me and have

had a huge impact on my life."

Getting a tattoo for attention because it's trendy at the time is a definite no. Unoriginal or inappropriate tattoos will not only promote the past stereotypes of people with tattoos, but it wouldn't be worth the pain or misfortune as well. Ultimately, everyone should consider the permanency of tattoos, the location of piercings and look for places to work that correlate not only to their professional interests, but also their personal beliefs. Find what works, and don't hold back on self-expression.

The views and opinions expressed in this column are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of The Collegian.

Hattie Doolittle is a junior in apparel and textiles. Please send comments to opinion@kstatecollegian.com.



ILLUSTRATION BY KENT WILLMETH

"I'm afraid the position's been filled."

Alumni share past fears about graduating, best and worst of adulthood

By **JAMIE TEIXEIRA**
THE COLLEGIAN

College can be a time to live on your own and develop the skills to become a functioning adult. However, part of it is still a cushion to normal, every day "adult" life where bills need to be paid and taxes need to be done. From alumni, the realities of true working life varies from that of college.

From school to work

After four years of college, getting a job or career started is encouraged for graduating seniors. Meaghan Wachter, December 2014 alumna, said she was afraid of leaving the college life for adulthood.

"Getting a full-time, full employment job scared me," Wachter said. "It's a big jump, making that step from the college world to the real world."

Wachter was not the only one nervous about finding a

job after graduating. Haylee Prescott, spring 2014 alumna and senior cook for K-State Housing and Dining, said she was worried about her chances in finding a job.

"I was scared mostly because I didn't do an internship," Prescott said. "Because I didn't do (one), I didn't have any outside experience."

Prescott said she believed that is why she didn't get a job in her major, agricultural business. Even if students don't get internships, Prescott said graduates should still "keep their eyes on the prize, and go out there and do what you want to do in life."

Although Prescott's job isn't one she expected to have after graduation, but she said she knows that if she keeps looking she can get her dream job.

"I have a job," Prescott said. "It's not the one I wanted, but if I work hard enough finding a job I want it shouldn't be too hard."

Wachter said she agrees

that it's hard work getting a career going, and you have to start the job search early. She also advises students to not be too selective either. Alumna Haley Kenig, current manager at Pinstripes, said you can't be too picky but you got to know what you want to do.

"Do as many internships as you can, go to the career fair and reach out to employers," Kenig said. "Find out what you really want to do before you just jump in."

Life at work

According to Prescott, going to school and having a job share some similarities and big differences.

"At times (a job) is less stressful because there is no homework or exams to study for," Prescott said. "But sometimes it's just as stressful because there's a lot of work, plus paying bills."

Koenig said she still works on projects and likes to caution people that they don't end after graduation.

"With my job I am still constantly writing papers and doing research," Kenig said. "It's just knowing that I am not going to get a degree for it and that it's my career makes me feel more grown up."

Paying bills and doing your taxes are adult things that some college students don't have to worry about, Wachter said she would advise starting those things while in college.

"It'll definitely be different when I get a career going," Wachter said. "But it feels the same."

Prescott said she also supported herself through college paying bills, doing taxes and keeping up on insurance.

"I was on my own and did it myself," Prescott said. "It's not difficult but it still sucks."

Like Prescott, Kenig paid bills and insurance and did her taxes while she was still in school.

"I've always kind of done that on my own," Kenig said. "It's something you're thrown into and have to do."

Prescott and Kenig credit their parents for the help they offered when it came to transitioning to the adult world.

"I learned a lot from my parents," Prescott said. "What I didn't learn from them I picked up in classes."

Kenig said she would advise graduating seniors to not be afraid to turn to your parents for help.

"I still use my mom to help me out," Kenig said. "And a lot of other people I know, they are my resources."

Life outside Manhattan

"There's not much I don't miss about Manhattan," Wachter said. "The night life, everything being close enough to walk to... It's a completely different world not being in Manhattan"

Prescott, who still resides in Manhattan near campus, said that although she misses her friends and social life at K-State, she doesn't miss classes.

"The thing I love the

most about being an adult, is that after work in the evening I can come home and do my own thing," Prescott said. "I can binge watch Netflix and not worry about getting things done for school the next day."

Kenig said she believes that students should still revel in their college time while they have it and that getting involved strengthens that experience.

"My advice is definitely enjoy it as much as possible," Kenig said. "College is supposed to be fun, enjoy those little moments and get involved."

Overall, working life involves more responsibility in some parts and less in others. While you have to pay bills and do taxes, you may not have to do projects and homework anymore. However, like with Kenig, some jobs do still have that project element to them. Whether moving away from Manhattan or staying, life as an "adult," begins once the last final is over.

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